

Wyoming Lender Alert

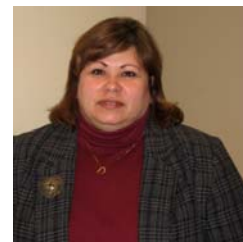
Information for the Small Business Community

September 2008

Making a Difference for Small Business in Wyoming

Diana Wallace Named Women in Business Champion of the Year 2008

The Wyoming District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration has named Diana Wallace as the Women in Business Champion of the Year 2008. This award was presented to her on Monday, May 5, 2008, at the Annual Chamber Dinner held at the Parkway Plaza Hotel & Convention Centre in Casper by Steve Parker, Lead Business Development Specialist, of the Wyoming Small Business Administration, presented Ms Wallace with this award. Diana was nominated by Theresa F. Christensen, Consumer Lending Manager, AVP of First Interstate Bank in Casper.



This award is given to an individual who has advanced women's business ownership. Evaluation criteria include efforts to increase business and financial opportunities for women, legal, financial or managerial assistance, voluntary efforts to strengthen the role of women business owners within the community and advocacy for the women-owned business community as a whole. The President of the United States recognizes contributions of the small business community to the American economy and society by proclamation each year.

Diana Wallace's career has spanned over 22 years in banking, 10 of those spent in consumer and small business retail banking services and business/consumer lending. Diana understands the pressures, challenges and opportunities for women in business. She is and has through the years been a business advocate. While it's often true that women and men approach the business of running a company differently, women owned and managed businesses require the same financial support as male owned and operated companies. Diana, in her career function, is and has been a specialist in providing solutions and resources to women owners and executives.

Diana has not only aided Women in Small Businesses through financial and service assistance, she has helped to empower women throughout Casper and Natrona County through her active involvement and commitment.

Diana truly believes in a woman's right and in most cases natural attribute to be able to lead and direct a business to be a successful enterprise. She has shown to have shared that conviction and belief with those she has interacted with for the past 22 years.

Selling to the Federal Government

The U.S. Small Business Administration will host a free workshop on selling to the federal government at the Teton County Library, Ordway Auditorium, from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 25, 2008.

Business owners attending this conference will be provided the opportunity to meet one-on-one with contracting representatives from the National Park Service; will find out how to sell their products and services to the federal government; will learn how to register to do business with the federal government; will discover what free assistance is available to help them obtain government contracts; and will gain an understanding of what the 8a program is, what HUBZones are (and if they are in one). SBA gives special thanks to the Teton County Library, Gro-Biz, National Park Service and Rainmaker Coaching.

For more information, please contact Deb Farris, Business Development

U.S. Small Business Administration

Wyoming District Office
100 E. "B" St., Room 4001
P.O. Box 44001
Casper, Wyoming 82602-5013
Phone: 307 261-6500
FAX: 307 261-6535
Web Site: <http://www.sba.gov/wy>

Steve Despain, District Director
(307) 261-6500
Steven.Despain@sba.gov

Bob Auflick, Deputy District Director
(307) 261-6507
Robert.Auflick@sba.gov

District Office Staff:
Steve Lobdell, District Counsel
(307) 261-6503
Steven.Lobdell@sba.gov

Beth Hink, Admin Officer/IT Spec.
(307) 261-6502
Elizabeth.Hink@sba.gov

Marilyn Coy, Adm. Support Asst.
(307) 261-6512
Marilyn.Coy@sba.gov

Sharon Nichols, Marketing Asst. & PIO
(307) 261-6508
Sharon.Nichols@sba.gov

Steve Parker, Business Deve. Spec.
(307) 261-6506
Stephen.Parker@sba.gov

Deb Farris, Business Dev. Spec.
(307) 261-6510
Debra.Farris@sba.gov

Dave Denke, Business Dev. Spec.
(307) 261-6523
David.Denke@sba.gov

Susan Rezanina, Business Dev. Spec.
(307) 261-6520
Susan.Rezanina@sba.gov

Calendar of Events

Sept 2 Women's Roundtable, Newcastle
Sept 3 Women's Roundtable, Casper
Sept 4 Women's Roundtable, Laramie
Sept 16 Women's Roundtable, Cody
Sept 17 Women's Roundtable, Wheatland
Sept 18 Women's Roundtable, Powell
Sept 25 Women's Roundtable, Worland
Sept 25 Selling to the Government, Free Workshop, Jackson

Specialist, SBA at 307-261-6510 or email debra.farris@sba.gov.

SBA Welcomes Acting Administrator Sandy K. Baruah

In response to President George W. Bush naming Sandy K. Baruah to be the U.S. Small Business Administration's Acting Administrator, today the agency welcomed Baruah and prepared for his arrival.

Baruah, who is pending Senate confirmation as SBA Administrator, is Assistant Secretary for Economic Development at the Department of Commerce, and comes to SBA with deep experience in promoting local business growth, managing organizational change, and responding to federal disasters. He has worked for small businesses, helped small businesses grow, and was raised by a mother who ran her own small business.

Baruah helped lead significant accomplishments for the Economic Development Administration, including the agency's induction into the Balanced Scorecard Hall of Fame, passage of EDA's Congressional reauthorization, the agency's inclusion in President Bush's Executive Order which established the Preserve America Initiative, and achieved the second-highest effectiveness ranking from the White House's Office Management and Budget.

Baruah was nominated June 26, 2008.

"I'm honored to be named SBA's Acting Administrator by the President," Baruah said. "I look forward to working with Deputy Administrator Jovita Carranza, who has ably carried on the agency's work with SBA's great team of professional staff. I intend to help SBA carry on its mission as it navigates the height of hurricane season and deals with the current economic challenges and tightening credit opportunities for small business."

"I'm also committed to continuing former SBA Administrator Steve Preston's reform agenda and seeing its improvements through," Baruah added. "SBA's customers and employees deserve an agency that is efficient, effective and customer friendly in fulfilling its important mission."

"I look forward to working with members of Congress and welcome the opportunity to work in a collaborative

and bipartisan manner to bring meaningful help to small business," Baruah concluded.

SBA Deputy Administrator Carranza welcomed Baruah. "We're very pleased to have a leader of Sandy's caliber joining our team and look forward to working with him. There's a great deal we still want to accomplish between now and January."

Baruah started at SBA Monday, August 18, 2008.

HUBZone Fact Sheet

The SBA recently reported concerns about the HUBZone program, based on a performance review of its operations and has taken the below steps to improve the program's management and minimize fraud.

- Most importantly, SBA recently put new leadership in charge of the HUBZone office. The SBA is currently recruiting additional staff with the needed skill sets to address these challenges and implement the changes to be undertaken.

- SBA is issuing guidance to HUBZone firms notifying them that the agency may ask any HUBZone firm to document its eligibility at any time and will immediately move to decertify any company upon a finding of ineligibility.

- The agency is instituting program examinations and performing site visits of HUBZone companies that have received HUBZone contracts to verify facts relating to their eligibility.

- The SBA will work aggressively with law enforcement to pursue anyone believed to have committed fraud in connection with the HUBZone program.

- SBA will immediately move to decertify and begin suspension and debarment proceedings against any HUBZone firm that is found to have intentionally misrepresented its eligibility status to the SBA in order to obtain a government contract.

- In July, a contract was executed to update and recertify the HUBZone map to ensure it remains accurate and continually up-to-date.

- SBA will release new guidelines for the HUBZone application process. The guidelines will provide explicit guidance about supporting documents and verification required in the application process to certify a firm's HUBZone status.

- SBA is working through the backlog of recertification applications, and is now more than 80 percent through that process. The remaining backlog will be

completed by the end of the fiscal year. The process is being re-engineered to enable the agency to complete future recertification faster.

SBA is contracting with an independent auditor to perform an in-depth analysis of the entire program. This audit will focus on additional program improvements: more stringent internal controls, make necessary policy changes, establish training, re-engineer processes, modernize IT to handle the additional controls and processes, implement quality controls to ensure data integrity, and identify weaknesses in the program on an ongoing basis. SBA will contract with an additional auditor to implement the improvements.

These reforms have begun, and will result in a HUBZone program that is managed more efficiently and effectively. They will also ensure the agency maintains the proper oversight, and internal controls, over the entire program.

Sacramento Loan Processing Center Office Move

U.S. Small Business Administration
Sacramento Loan Processing Center
6501 Sylvan Rd., Suite 111
Citrus Heights, CA 95610-5017

Lenders Transaction Contacts:

Sally Schimmel	916-231-3470
Rose Kim	916-231-3560
Mary Miller	916-231-3465
Nu Vang	916-231-3481
Linda Truong	916-231-3482
Yketha Grant	916-231-3479
Lender Fax:	916-231-3552

Lender Identification Coordinator

Contact:

Patty Scott 916-231-3472
Patty.scott@sba.gov

SBA Introduces Two New Online Finance Courses for Small Business Owners

The U.S. Small Business Administration has introduced two new free online finance courses to help small business owners with the basic principles of finance and borrowing.

The new self-paced courses, Finance Primer: Guide to SBA's Loan Guaranty Programs at:

<http://app1.sba.gov/sbtn/registration/in dex.cfm?CourseId=29> and How to Prepare a Loan Package at:

<http://app1.sba.gov/sbtn/registration/in dex.cfm?CourseId=28>, walk business owners through steps that answer

questions about what debt financing is, what loan programs are available, what small businesses should know about borrowing money, how to prepare a loan package and how loan requests are reviewed by lenders.

The Finance Primer gives an overview of the SBA's loan guaranty programs to help small businesses understand the variety of financial resources, including those from the SBA.

The finance courses can help entrepreneurs avoid some of the common mistakes made such as securing the wrong type of financing, miscalculating the amount of financing required, and underestimating the cost of borrowing money.

The Loan Package course includes small business links to related information, and refers course participants for direct support in preparing a loan request to appropriate resources that include SBA's district offices, SBA resource partners and lenders.

The new finance courses have been added to a menu of more than 26 online tutorials offered by the SBA. On a typical day, 800 to 2,000 customers register for free online courses offered by the SBA through its virtual training campus at the Small Business Training Network (SBTN) (www.sba.gov/training).

Office of National Ombudsman Annual Report

The Office of the National Ombudsman at the U.S. Small Business Administration recently released its annual report to the 110th Congress, rating federal agencies' responsiveness to the regulatory enforcement and compliance issues faced by small businesses during fiscal year 2007.

The National Ombudsman provides a voice for small businesses in the federal regulatory enforcement process. Created by the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act (SBREFA), the Office of the National Ombudsman works with small businesses and federal agencies to ensure that regulatory or compliance issues are handled and enforced fairly.

"It is essential that regulatory enforcement be effective, and not excessive," said National Ombudsman

and Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Nicholas N. Owens. "Our focus will continue to enhance transparency for small businesses served, while strengthening the relationship between the small business community and the government."

In 2007, the ONO significantly increased its responsiveness to small businesses, handling over 500 cases involving regulatory or compliance issues. Federal agencies decreased its response time to these cases from 52 days in 2006 to 27 days in 2007.

Each agency receives a "grade" from the National Ombudsman, rating its responsiveness to small business regulatory enforcement concerns. The annual report summarizes these ratings (which can be found in table II-1 of the report), based on five categories that include:

- The agency's timeliness and quality of response to small business comments;
- Presence of a non-retaliation policy;
- The degree of regulatory enforcement compliance assistance to small businesses;
- The agency's participation in Regulatory Fairness hearings; and
- How the agency informs small businesses about the SBREFA, as well as their rights to contact the Office of the National Ombudsman to discuss the enforcement and compliance process.

In 2007, federal agencies across the board improved their compliance efforts. This year, the National Ombudsman recognized six federal agencies for their extraordinary efforts in responding to small businesses' regulatory enforcement cases. "Although agencies are obligated to provide responses under SBREFA, it is my belief that the quality of our work is enhanced when it is met with positive compliance assistance efforts, rather than going straight to a penalty stage," said Owens. The six agencies acknowledged with the "National Ombudsman's Special Recognition for Regulatory Enforcement and Compliance Assistance" are listed in the report.

The National Ombudsman's 2007 annual report and additional information about the Office of the National Ombudsman is available at www.sba.gov/ombudsman.

**Government Contracting
Seminar for Small Businesses**
**Interested in marketing your
products or services to Federal, State
and/or local government agencies?**
You need to attend this seminar!
**Thursday, September 25th -
12:00 to 1:30 PM**
Natrona County Library

The Federal Government spends approximately \$300 billion annually, purchasing just about every type of product and service you can think of. Approximately \$300 million of that total is spent in Wyoming, and they are interested in bringing small businesses into their supply chain. In fact, most federal agencies have contracting quotas that include purchasing from small, minority and disadvantaged businesses.

Learn required registrations, how to join Bid Match program, products and services federal agencies are currently purchasing and more!

Speaker is Shannon Howshar, Procurement Counselor for GRO-Biz. GRO-Biz is part of the:

www.wyomingEntrepreneur.biz
Network and supported by the Defense Logistics Agency, Wyoming Business Council and the University of Wyoming. The GRO-Biz mission is to help small businesses contract with the government. Shannon is a certified Associate Contracting Assistant Specialist/Business Counselor. She can help you with federal and state registrations, SBA certification applications, contracting regulations and compliance, bid preparation, post-award counseling, etc.

**There is no fee for this
seminar and lunch is
included. Please, pre-
register at the Library or
call 237-4935, ext. 2 so
we have a meal count.
Registration Deadline
is September 18th.**